

17 April 1986

PRIME MINISTER

Princess of Wales attends dinner hosted by Canadian High Commission

EC Foreign Ministers attend special meeting to discuss Libya

EC Development Council, Luxembourg

OECD Ministerial meeting, Paris (to April 18)

GDR Party Congress opens

Australian Prime Minister meets President Reagan, Washington

Possible handover of HMS Hydra to Indonesia

Badminton Horse Trials begin (to April 20)

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STATISTICS

BOE: London sterling certificates of deposit (March)

BOE: UK banks assets and liabilities and the money stock (mid-March)

CSO: Index of output of the production industries (February)

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PUBLICATIONS

CO: Civil Service Commission annual report

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PARLIAMENT

Commons

Questions: Treasury; Home Office; Prime Minister

Business: Debate on Agriculture Bill (remaining stages)

Adjournment Debate

Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme (Sir H Atkins)

Lords

Education Bill (HL): Committee (3rd Day)

Protection of Military Remains Bill: Second Reading

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MINISTERS - See Annex

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PRESS DIGEST

LIBYA

- Polls split roughly 2-1 against US action and permitting them to use their bases.
- Comfortable Commons majority.
- Gaddafi emerges to say Libya fights on; Express says bombs came within a few hundred yards of killing Gaddafi in his bed.
- Bungling Libyans accused of some of the damage (by sea missiles) shown on TV.
- Navy said to be standing by to take off Britons from Libya.
- Foreign Secretary off to Paris to press EC again to take stronger action.
- People living near US bases in Britain now fear reprisals.
- The National Union of Seamen has asked the General Council of British Shipping to declare the Libyan coast a war zone which would mean that seamen would get double pay.
  
- British holidaymaker stabbed to death and another wounded by crazed Arab in Morocco; American envoy shot in the head in Sudan.
  
- D/Star: Front page picture of WPC Yvonne Fletcher's memorial under the heading "Lest we forget" - it is 2 years ago today that she was shot. Inside you revealed to the world "Gaddafi file of evil".
  - Leader says it was one of the most impressive speeches you have ever delivered; only argument was over tactics rather than the longer term aim. Only disappointment in your case was refusal to go along with economic sanctions.
  - Joe Ashton says that all you need to shoot up the opinion polls now is one bomb in a crowded London pub.
- Sun leads with "I'll fight on, says Gaddafi".
  - Leader, on sudden new life for CND, says it doesn't recall CND protests against Gaddafi's terrorism or Russian genocide in Afghanistan. When pacifism is aimed only at one side it becomes a fifth column.
  - John Vincent, in Sun, says in trying to show their independence of America, Europe displays abject submission to Libya.
- Mirror p1: "Mad dog Gaddafi comes out of hiding"; inside; the guilt of Gaddafi exposed (by you).
  - Leader: If the terrorism of Col Gaddafi and his gangs had been unanswered and unpunished it would have continued and spread.

LIBYA (Cont'd)

Sanctions would certainly be best but Europe refused to impose them. If it changes its mind now it will be because of the bombing.

- Express says security service has a list of up to 30 Libyans in Britain believed to be "sleeping dog" revolutionaries; special watch being kept on them.
- John Ellison asks whether these are the final hours for Libya's Messiah of Terror; US gamble is that the raid will encourage mounting tide of opposition to Gaddafi.
- Leader says you convincingly won the argument - not surprisingly because you had the better arguments. The notion that by using force against terrorists you only provoke more terrorism is appeasement pure and simple. To call for sanctions is to call for precisely nothing. Mr Kinnoch has much to learn and it is as well for Britain his education is taking place in Opposition.
- Mail leads with: "Gaddafi goes live on TV". Story claims Sir Geoffrey Howe revealed last night that you alone took decision to allow use of bases - their interpretation of his saying he did not know of decision to authorise raid until he returned to London.
- Amit Roy, who recently interviewed Gaddafi, claims that the raid has confirmed in Arab eyes Gaddafi's view of himself as a great leader and freedom fighter.
- Leader notes that suddenly your critics, after seeing the evidence of Gaddafi's terrorism, no longer appeared to care much about it. Airily they implied they had taken it for granted. While the PM stands firm the grounds of opposition shift.
- Today report that 4 Libyans have disappeared in Britain amid fears that Gaddafi has activated a team of sleepers.
- Leader: European Governments and demonstrators have one thing in common: willingness to shake their fists in the face of their American ally knowing they can do so in total safety. But they are cowards in the face of their real enemy. Just as we thought the American raid was wrong and ineffective, so we think of the Euro-attitude.
- Telegraph: You refuse to give Reagan a blank cheque, and Gaddafi demands you are put on trial.
- Telegraph says Giscard gave unambiguous support to American action yesterday.
- Leader says Government's task now lies in the need for public reassurance about consequences of American bases in Britain.
- Feature says Washington is calling on its allies' debts to settle with Libya.

LIBYA (Cont'd)

- FT: It was one of your most effective Parliamentary performances. However, a large group of Tory MPs are privately worried about the action playing into the hands of Labour and CND in the campaign to close US nuclear bases.
- Review of world-wide press comment suggests there is growing acceptance of reasons for raid, particularly in West Germany.
- Guardian says Tripoli is jittery but revolt is denied. White House threatens new attacks against Libya. Aggressive Thatcher calms Tory nerves.
  - Leader says the question is increasingly not one of evidence or provocation or righteous wrath but of ends and means and right and wrong. It claims there is not a defined international terrorist movement and criticises the illusion that desperate, roaming fanatics can be stilled by the shedding of a baby's blood.
  - Hugo Young notes a change in your tone between Tuesday and yesterday towards "the most reckless act even this American President has perpetrated". This reflects a measure of prudence on your part induced by a rearrangement of balance of forces in your Cabinet. All your senior Ministers are sceptical about a repeat performance and have been prepared to say so.
- Times: President Reagan effusively thanked Britain yesterday; you won the overwhelming support of your Party with a robust defence.
- Times: The Pentagon insisted yesterday that the use of F111s from England was vital for the success of the raid and not merely a gesture to demonstrate support from at least one European ally.
  - Ronald Butt says the Conservatives will pay a heavy price for your support for President Reagan. It could well cost you the election.

ECONOMY

- Sharp drop in unemployment could not conceal huge increase in underlying trend (D/Star) - and Labour says the figures fiddled anyway.
- The Chancellor and Foreign Secretary joined forces yesterday to put public pressure on you to take Britain into the EMS.
- FT: The best PSER figures since the Conservatives came to office have fuelled hopes of a further cut in interest rates.
- Pay rises well ahead of inflation.
- Times: Many of Britains roads and bridges are falling apart, says Infrastructure Planning Group.
- Express leader praises the Chancellor's imaginative Personal Equity Plan investment.

INDUSTRY

- Sir Terence Beckett to retire at the end of the year.
- Ford and Fiat merge truck operations from July. Ford unions fear an Italian takeover and say they will fight it.
- Ballot on industrial action by electricity workers after rejection of 5.5% pay offer.
- Professor John Vincent, in Sun, says the strike by Swan Hunter workers is one way of telling the world that your competitors will do a more reliable job.
- Woolworths closing 22 stores with loss of 1000 jobs.
- Dockers to lose their jobs for life guarantee (Express).
- Tailors' union mounting lobby to prevent scrapping of MPA and so stop a flood of cheap imports from Far East.
- National Consumer Council says people are being "seduced by plastic" cards into debt - credit industry too keen to lend.
- Mail leader, against 10% levy on tapes, says it is a controversial doctrine; if you can't beat the cheats tax the innocent as well.

INDUSTRY (Cont'd)

- AOR contract expected to go to Harland & Wolff today.
- Times: Swan Hunter should be renationalised if it loses the contract, the organiser of the management buy-out says. It was very wrong to encourage City institutions to back the company on a design and building prospectus and then emasculate them.

POLITICS

- Latest Gallup puts Labour in lead - 38.5/SDP/Libs 31.5/Con 28.

MEDIA

- New Murdoch offer to printers of £15m for pay-offs to those who do not get jobs at Gray's Inn printing works already offered to unions; deadline for settlement May 7.
- FT: Tough new powers to limit newspaper ownership would be introduced by a Labour Government, Clive Soley, home affairs spokesman, announced yesterday.

SUNDAY TRADING

- Rank hypocrisy from Britain's church leaders, backed by Paisleyites, to have stopped reform of Sunday trading, says John Vincent (Sun). Leader wants to know why 4 PPSs who abstained are not being sacked.
- Frank Chapple, in Mail, says defeat of the Bill is bad news and - hypocritical, will cost jobs rather than save them, and leave a chaotic law as chaotic as ever.
- Mail says DIY giants will defy the law and Sainsbury is to open 13 Homebase stores.
- Today says the loss of the Bill is a real blow to your Government and the nation, and Thatcherism is the clearest casualty. Sorry to see it frustrated.

HEALTH/WELFARE

- Nearly half Tory voters believe the Government doesn't give a damn about the poor (Mirror).
- Doctors call for expansion of drug treatment clinics and more funds for voluntary organisations bearing the brunt of the battle against drugs (Express).
- Times: Deaths from whooping cough may be 6 times higher than the official figures, say the British Paediatric Association.

EDUCATION

- Dartington Hall, dubbed the school for scandal, forced to close because its reputation frightened off parents.
- NUT, now to consider strike ballot after a series of snubs culminating in rejection by other unions of its proposed £1,700 pay claim.
- The NUT and the DES are to talk about the introduction of the GCSE - raising hopes that a serious dispute can be arrested.

LAW AND ORDER

- Six arrested in swoop on what is believed to be a laundering operation for Mafia drugs profits.
- British Safety Council wants crossbows and catapults banned by law.
- West Midlands police authority allows Chief Constable to buy plastic bullets and launchers.
- FT: You intervened in the prison officers' dispute yesterday with a declaration of the Government's intention to maintain a firm line.
- Times: The Home Office is reviewing the position of kidnap ransom insurance.
- Broadwater Farm police chief criticises way complaints against the police are handled

SPORT

- London soccer fan, 18, dies four days after fight involving Milwall fans in Sheffield.
- Express launches campaign against unlicensed boxing - or street fighting.
- The BBC has approached the Government, the IBA and the Sports Council seeking tighter controls over tobacco sponsorship of televised sport.

OTHER ITEMS

- Mrs Guinness tells of her kidnap ordeal in bonds, blindfolded and under threat of execution; 6 arrested - two wanted for questioning over killing of Yorkshire policeman 18 months ago.
- Nicholas Winterton MP says decision not to have a national holiday for the Royal Wedding is killjoy.
- Ex-Emperor Bokassa, in Paris, says he is broke.

JAPAN

- A general election is expected on June 22.

NORTHERN IRELAND

- You attempt to break the deadlock.
- FT: The electricity industry in Northern Ireland may end its reliance on British coal by entering long-term contracts for cheaper imports.
- UDA members have been ordered to demonstrate today after burial of Protestant plastic bullet victim.

MINISTERS (UK VISITS, SPEECHES ETC)

- MAFF: Mr Jopling meets President of the New Zealand Dairy Board
- DEM: Lord Young addresses South East England Tourist Board annual dinner, Tunbridge Wells
- DTI: Mr Channon guest of honour, "Chambre de Commerce Francais de Grande Bretagne", gala dinner
- DTP: Mr Ridley meets American Ambassador
- DEN: Mr Hunt visits Bilston Glen colliery, Scotland
- DOE: Mrs Rumbold visits Colne Valley Park, Buckinghamshire
- DES: Mr Patten visits Leeds
- DEM: Mr Trippier visits Enterprise Express, Newcastle-upon-Tyne
- FCO: Lady Young addresses Institution of Civil Engineers, Harrogate
- DHSS: Mr Newton opens Royal National Hospital for Rheumatic Diseases National Conference on Driving Problems for Disabled People, Bath University
- SO: Mr Ancram addresses Rating and Valuation Association AGM (Rate Reform), North Berwick
- DTI: Mr Morrison visits London Docklands; addresses Motor Industry PR Association
- DTI: Lord Lucas attends Primary Science and Technology Conference dinner, Plymouth
- DTP: Mr Spicer addresses Reading Chamber of Commerce and Trade
- DTP: Mr Mitchell opens Council for Environmental Conservation Conference, London
- HMT: Mr Moore addresses Institute of International Research, London
- HMT: Mr Stewart addresses Metropolitan Association of Building Societies
- WO: Mr Robinson addresses Gwent County Council on rates reform, Cwmbran
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MINISTERS (OVERSEAS VISITS)

- HMT: Mr Lawson attends OECD meeting, Paris (Sir Geoffrey Howe and Mr Clark (DTI) also attend)
- DTI: Mr Clark attends OECD meeting, Paris
- DTI: Mr Pattie visits Stuttgart, FRG (to April 18)
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TV AND RADIO

"Tomorrow's World"; BBC 1 (20.00): Includes an item on the reprocessing of Britain's nuclear waste and whether its really necessary

"Worldwise Reports"; Channel 4 (20.00): "What have they done to rain?". As a prelude to next week's International Acid Rain week, the programme highlights action on acid rain

"Brass Tacks"; BBC 2 (20.00): "Cloudburst". Examines the threat to many hundreds of communities living near Britain's chemical plants from an escape of toxic gas. Includes an in-depth report on ICI's safety procedures

"TV Eye"; ITV (21.30)

"Question Time"; BBC 1 (22.00): With Norman Fowler MP, Donald Dewar MP, Margaret Clay and Sir James Cleminson

"Brazil, Brazil"; BBC 1 (23.00): Examines the economic and financial problems facing the new civilian government in Brazil. Includes interview with President Jose Sarney and Financial Times Correspondent, Andrew Whitley

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